

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for automatically processing studies acquired by an imaging examination system having a first computer connected via a network to a plurality of further computers, said method comprising the steps of:

for each study in a plurality of studies, comprising study data, acquired by said imaging examination system, assigning a priority code indicating a relative priority for processing that study;

dependent on said priority code, either immediately processing said study on said first computer by automatically diagnostically analyzing the study data thereof in said first computer to produce a medial finding, or intermediately storing the study data of said study in a memory device for later processing of the study data and allocating respective identifiers, in a processing job list, to all studies stored in said memory and, at respective later points in time, processing the respective study data of the studies stored in the memory in said processing job list according to a predetermined sequence; and

for processing the respective study data of the said studies stored in said memory at said respective later points in time, checking respective availabilities of said further computers for processing one of said studies according to said processing job list, and communicating one of said studies according to said processing job list to one of said further computers having availability and automatically diagnostically

analyzing ~~processing~~ the study data thereof in said one of said other computers having availability to produce a medical finding.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step of checking availability of said other computers comprises checking a workload of the respective other computers.

3. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein each study has a study type associated therewith, and comprising allocating said priority code to the respective study dependent on the study type.

Claim 4 has been amended as follows:

4. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising, before assigning said priority code to a study, automatically pre-evaluating at least a portion of the study data of that study and assigning said priority code dependent on said pre-evaluation.

Claim 5 has been amended as follows:

5. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein said study data include ~~includes~~ an image comprising image features and at least one defined limit value, and wherein the step of pre-evaluating at least a part of the study comprises analyzing at least one of said image feature and said at least one defined limit value.

6. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising the additional steps of monitoring an occupancy of said network and transmitting a study from said memory to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of said network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

7. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising ordering said studies in said predefined sequence according to said priority codes.

Claim 8 has been amended as follows:

8. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said network has a central computer connected thereto, and comprising the steps of administering said processing job list in said central computer by, in said central computer, checking the respective availabilities of said other computers and initiating transmission of said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers having availability for processing the study data thereof.

9. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8 comprising the additional step of, in said central computer, monitoring an occupancy of said network and transmitting said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers only if said occupancy of the network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

Claim 10 has been amended as follows:

10. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said plurality of studies include interrelated studies, and comprising processing the respective study data said interrelated studies in common by automatically diagnostically analyzing the respective study data of said interrelated studies, either in said first computer or said one of said other computers dependent on the priority code of at least one said interrelated studies.

Claim 11 has been amended as follows:

11. (Currently amended) A computerized system for automatically processing studies acquired by an imaging examination system, said computerized system comprising:

a first computer connected to an imaging examination system that acquires a plurality of studies, each of said studies comprising study data;

a priority allocation module ~~that allocates~~ configured to allocate respective priority codes to said studies according to a relative processing priority;

a plurality of other computers in communication with said first computer, each of said first computer and said plurality of other computers comprising a processor configured to ~~for~~ automatically process ~~processing~~ said studies by automatically diagnostically analyzing the study data thereof to produce a medical finding;

a memory accessible by said first computer and said other computers; and dependent on the priority code allocated to a study, either said first computer automatically ~~processing~~ analyzing the study data of that study or ~~that study being intermediately stored~~ storing that study in said memory and ~~being allocated to~~ an identifier in a processing job list for all studies stored in said memory; and

a module configured to check ~~for checking~~ respective availabilities of said other computers and to transmit ~~transmitting~~ one of said studies from said memory according to said processing job list to one of said other computers dependent on the availability of said one of said other

computers, for processing the study data thereof in said one of said other computes to produce a medical finding.

Claim 12 has been amended as follows:

12. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said module is configured to check ~~checks~~ the respective availabilities of the other computers by checking the respective workloads of the other computers.

13. (Original) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said priority allocation module comprises a user interface allowing manual entry of respective priority codes for said plurality of studies.

Claim 14 has been amended as follows:

14. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said priority allocation module comprises a priority allocation memory containing a list of study types, and wherein said priority allocation module ~~allocates~~ is configured to allocate said priority codes dependent on a study type of each study in said plurality of studies.

Claim 15 has been amended as follows:

15. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said first computer includes a pre-evaluation module configured to automatically implement ~~which~~, before allocation of said priority code by said priority allocation module, ~~automatically implements~~ a pre-evaluation of at least a part of a study, thereby obtaining pre-evaluation data, and ~~communicates~~ to communicate said pre-evaluation data to said priority allocation module, and wherein said priority allocation module ~~allocates~~ to allocate a priority code to that study dependent on the pre-evaluation data for that study.

Claim 16 has been amended as follows:

16. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 15 wherein said pre-evaluation module comprises an image processing unit, for analyzing configured to analyze features of an image associated with the study within the automatic diagnostic analysis of the study data of that study.

Claim 17 has been amended as follows:

17. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said first computer and said other computers are in communication via a network, and wherein said module for transmitting said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers ~~monitors~~ is configured to monitor an occupancy of said network and ~~transmits to transmit~~ said one of said studies to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of said network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

Claim 18 has been amended as follows:

18. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 further comprising a central computer containing said module, said central computer ~~administering~~ being configured to said processing job list using said module.

Claim 19 has been amended as follows:

19. (Currently amended) A computerized system as claimed in claim 18 wherein said first computer and said other computers are in communication with each other via a network, and wherein said central computer ~~monitors~~ is configured to monitor an occupancy of said network and ~~initiates~~ to initiate transmission of said

one of said studies to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of the network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.